

OCTOBER 2 2025 FATHER JOHN BERTAIO

Today's solemn--not solemnity, or rather today's Feast of the Guardian Angels takes me back a few years, when my mother was either still living at home in our house, or later on, in long-term care.

Her hearing was not the greatest, and every time I came into the room, or I would see her holding the rosary, and she had this little, beautiful, angelic smile on her face. Finally, one day I asked her why she was smiling, thinking, of course, that she was going to say: "Oh, to see you here, I'm so happy!" Instead, her reply was: "Oh! I was praying with my guardian angel."

I'm competing with a guardian angel. With my mom.

Are you alone? Like do you think you're alone? Think again. Just because you don't see a physical person in the room with you, I assure you that you are not alone.

Your personal--so your own personal guardian angel is right there, looking over your shoulder. The right or the left, not sure which one it's going to be today.

You may not see, feel, or notice the presence of your guardian angel, or their presence, but that does not mean that he's not there. Let me assure you that your guardian angel never, will never get away from what you want. From what you're doing, from you, any time at all, whatsoever. No matter what you do, or what you say.

They are comforted--they are to comfort you in times that you want, even when you don't want, you think, their presence. Unlike some saints in recent history we might not see our guardian angels, but this Memorial of the Guardian Angels spurs us on to be close to them, and call upon them for their help any time we need it.

Like, right now, in me, trying to reach you, in this beautiful time. Our Lord Jesus said: "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father." That, we just read from Saint Matthew's Gospel.

And the Catechism for the Catholic Church states: "From infancy, the human life is surrounded by the angels' watchful care and intercession, beside each believer. He has an angel as a protector and shepherd, leading him to life." It continues: "Already, here on earth, the Christian life shares the faith in the blessed company of angels of men, united to God.

That's all of us.

Some examples of a few people who have shared the world with us, and have communicated with their guardian angels. For example, we started with, first, as I'm sure you've heard about him, Saint Padre Pio Pietrelcina. There was also Saint Gemma Galgani, Saint Frances of Rome, and Saint Faustina of Kowalska, just to name a few.

Example: Padre Pio suggested that we, and I quote him, "Develop a beautiful habit of always thinking of him," being the guardian angel, "that near us is a celestial spirit, who, from the cradle to the tomb, does not leave us for one instant. Guides us, protects us, as a friend, a brother. They will always be a consolation to us, especially in times of saddest moments and pain."

Also, he continued, because Padre Pio was so popular, he received many letters in different languages that he did not know how to interpret, as in one example, such as Greek. He did not know Greek. Yet Padre Pio knew exactly what the letter said, with the help of his guardian angels. So they inspire us in so many different ways

There are many other incidents that Padre Pio related, about this relationship with his guardian angel. Too many to mention in this short time that we have together. But, but...

There are a couple of other saints who also communicated with their guardian angel. As I mentioned before, Saint Gemma Galgani. Just in case you haven't heard of her, like I hadn't before, she is the patron saint of students, pharmacists, those suffering from back pain, headaches, and suffering with temptations of impurity. Those seeking purity of heart, and those who have lost their parents, like myself.

Gemma saw her guardian angel with her own eyes. She touched him with her hand, as if he were a being in this world, and would talk to him as one would talk to another. As she wrote to her spiritual director: "Jesus has not left me alone, he makes my

guardian angel stay with me always." What a beautiful comfort that is.

Once, suffering from and absorbed in prayer, she saw her guardian angel standing by her bed. He told her: "Jesus loves you, so, so much. Love him greatly in return." Because sometimes when we're in pain, we don't want to think about prayer and Jesus, but this is the time to do it.

The angel also said: "You are--" He asked the question: "Are you fond of Jesus' Mother?" Another one after my own heart. "Are you fond of Jesus' Mother?" Then he said: "Salute her very often, for she values such attention very much, and unfailingly returns the salutations offered to her. If you do not sense this, know that she makes a proof of your unfailing trust."

How many times? How many times do you acknowledge Mary in your life during the day? Just by simply saying, "Hail Mary." That's it. "Hail Mary." One day she'll turn her back to you, and say hail to you, as well.

Her angel also taught her, many times, how to act in the presence of God, that is, to adore him in infinite goodness, his infinite majesty, his mercy, and all his attributes. Like Father Pio would do, Gemma also would send her guardian angel, to go away on an errand that she needed done, asking Jesus and Mary for permission or assistance. Always never failing, her guardian angel would bring back the reply, never failing with a request.

And then, very quickly, Saint Frances of Rome. Another saint gifted with communicating with their guardian angel. Saint Frances was noted as saying that her guardian angel looked like a boy around nine years old. His eyes twinkled and danced as he looked at her. He had the kindest, most loving expression in his face. His blonde hair was like fine golden yarn. "I then," she says, "I reached out, and down his neck--" The hair. "...Reached down along his neck, and touched his shoulders.

The light from his hair enabled Frances to read her office of reading at night, without any other light around. And then, she also wrote, through the angel she could see into men's hearts, and discern when the devil was in charge of her soul, and trying to take it away from her. From God.

The angel walked always before her, the right--the light of her left--the right light--the right of her light was left her--over her, and greeted her, always there to protect. The light of Christ was always with her.

And, very quickly, Saint Faustina of Kowalska. You've heard about her. The divine mercy. Well, there were so many things with Saint Faustina that she wrote about, that one of them was, when a young nun, Saint Faustina travelled with her guardian angel to a mystic place full of fire, in which there was a great crowd of suffering, and then she wrote--this was in purgatory, where many people were suffering, she wrote:

They were in purgatory... "They were praying fervently, but to no avail, for themselves. Only we can come to their aid." To pray for the souls in purgatory, who can't come to their own aid. We come

to aid. In offering, often, prayers for those souls in purgatory. Because we don't know when it's going to be our turn, when we need somebody else's prayer.

She continues: "The flames which were burning--which were burning them, did not touch them at all. My guardian angel did not leave me alone for one instant. I asked these souls what their greatest suffering was. They answered me in one voice, that their greatest torment was longing for God."

Do you long for God?

Once, being harassed by devils, she called on her guardian angel for help. And, of course, the guardian angel was right there. Saint Faustina's guardian angel asked her to pray especially for the dying. As she said it, and I close with this, "My guardian angel told me to pray for a certain soul in the morning, and I learned that it was a man whose agony had begun that very moment. The Lord Jesus makes it known to me in a special way when someone is in need of prayer. I especially know when my prayer is needed by a dying soul."

It's a good thing to remember when we might be inspired to pray, for someone unknown to us, for some unknown person. And the Chapel of the Divine Mercy is a beautiful way to do that prayer.

There is much, much more that I can say about our guardian angels, but maybe another time. I encourage you to think seriously about God's gift of your own guardian angel, who's right there, as my guardian angel's right here with me. Even through this media of television and so on, the guardian angel is always there.

Like my mom. Close your eyes. Use your imagination. Who knows what God will let you see through your guardian angel. Just close your eyes...

And let's close with this beautiful prayer, that I think you know, and if you don't, you'll get to know it. The prayer that you should say every day to your guardian angel:

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide.

One more time?

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.